

Message Text

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ACTION ARA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CU-02 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02 INR-07

L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06

LAB-04 SIL-01 EB-07 DOTE-00 AID-05 PC-01 SY-05 AS-01

/083 W

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R 082225Z JAN 76

FM AMEMBASSY QUITO

TO SECSTATE WASHFK 8566

INFO AMCONSUL GUAYAQUIL

C O N F I D E N T I A L QUITO 0199

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: ELAB, PINT, EC

SUBJECT: GOE ACTS IN TRANSPORTATION STRIKE

REF: A) QUITO 0082 B) QUITO 0105 C) QUITO 0123

1. ON JAN 7 THE GOE MADE A SERIES OF DECISIONS WHICH IT HOPED WOULD END THE CURRENT NATIONWIDE TRANSPORTATION STRIKE AND SATISFY THE DEMANDS OF THOSE GROUPS (MAINLY STUDENTS) THAT HAD RECENTLY TAKEN TO THE STREETS TO PROTEST THE INCREASE IN BUS FARES THAT WENT INTO EFFECT JAN 1.

2. THE ANNOUNCEMENTS PUBLISHED JAN 8 THE GOE EXPRESSED THE FOLLOWING POINTS:

A) ALL BUS FARES WILL BE ONE SUCRE (\$.04US). ON DEC 11 THE GOE HAD AGREED TO ALLOW A RAISE IN BASIC BUS FARE FROM .80 SUCRES TO 1 SUCRE AND FROM ONE TO 1.2 FOR FIRST CLASS BUSES (COLECTIVOS);

B) THE CURRENT "MONOPOLY" OF EXISTING UNITS WILL BE ENDED BY ALLOWING ANYONE WITH A BUS TO ENTER SERVICE;

C) THE GOE WILL UNDERTAKE STUDIES TO DETERMINE HOW EMPLOYEES

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DRIVING BUSES CAN BE PROPRIETORS;

D) THE GOE WILL STUDY THE POSSIBILITY OF DUTY-FREE IMPORTATION OF REPLACEMENT PARTS USED BY URBAN TRANSPORT;

E) A NEW TRAFFIC LAW WILL BE ISSUED AS SOON AS POSSIBLE;

F) THE GOE INTENDS TO BEGIN ACTION TO PROGRESSIVELY NATIONALIZE URBAN TRANSPORTATION.

3. THE NATIONWIDE STRIKE (SEE REFTELS) CONTINUES, ALTHOUGH WITH DECREASING EFFECTIVENESS. A NUMBER OF BUSES ARE CIRCULATING IN QUITO AND MANY INTER-URBAN BUSES ARE SEEN ON THE ROADS. THE LEADERS OF THE TRANSPORTATION STRIKE MET THE EVENING OF JAN 7 AND THROUGHOUT THE DAY JAN 8. THE OPERATORS OF BASIC BUSES, BEING THE ONLY ONES TO PROFIT FROM THE RECENT GOE DECISION, WALKED OUT OF THE MEETING LATE JAN 8, ANNOUNCING THEIR INTENTION FOR RETURN TO WORK. COLECTIVO DRIVERS REPORTEDLY VOWED TO CARRY ON THE STRIKE.

4. COMMENT: THE FIXING OF A 1 SUCRE BUS FARE, WHILE GIVING THE IMPRESSION OF SATISFYING STUDENT DEMANDS, ACTUALLY IS A PARTIAL RATIFICATION OF THE FARE RAISE GRANTED BY THE GOVERNMENT DEC 11. HOWEVER, THE GOVERNMENT HAS IN PART RENEGED ON ITS UNDERSTANDING WITH THE TRANSPORT ORGANIZATIONS, THE STRONGEST UNION-COOPERATIVE ORGANIZATIONS IN THE COUNTRY. THE WALKOUT BY BUS OPERATORS MAY HAVE BROKEN THE TRANSPORT MOVEMENT'S UNITY AND MAY HAVE LONG LASTING CONSEQUENCES IN TERMS OF ORGANIZATIONAL STRENGTHS.
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